

REMARKS

Initially, in the Office Action dated February 6, 2004, the Examiner has objected to the drawings and specification because of informalities. The Examiner has objected to the title as not being descriptive. The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 3 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,076,083 (Baker). Claims 2 and 4-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Baker in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,920,856 (Syeda-Mahmood) and further in view of "Interoperability of Multiple Autonomous Databases", September 1990 (Litwin et al.).

By the present response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 5, 8, 11, and 12 to further clarify the invention. Applicants have submitted new claims 14-33 for consideration by the Examiner and assert that these claims do not contain any prohibited new matter. Claims 1-33 remain pending in the present application.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner states that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on October 3, 2001 fails to comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.97, 1.98 and MPEP §609. Applicants have submitted concurrently with this Amendment a new IDS and 1449 which fully complies with these sections.

Drawings Objections

Figs. 6, 11 and 16 have been objected to. Applicants do not understand the Examiner's statements regarding Fig. 6. Step 604 relates to displaying of the problem case and not searching. The search at step 605 for problem case database is performed only when the search at 602 for problem meta database is not done, as shown by the descriptions in 602 and its "no" decision. As described on page 10, lines 14-18, "problem case" which corresponds to, i.e., derived from, a combination of solution rules, parameters to be both improved and deteriorated are found out from the problem case database 105. Solution rules and parameters to be both improved and deteriorated are classified into a problem meta database (shown in Fig. 3). What are simultaneously displayed at step 604 are contents of both the meta database 106 shown in Fig. 3 and the solution rule shown in Fig. 4. An example of this simultaneous indication is shown in Fig. 7. Accordingly, Applicants do not feel an amendment to Fig. 6 is necessary.

Regarding the other concerns of the Examiner, the Applicants have amended the figures to further clarify the invention and correct these minor errors. Accordingly, Applicants request that these objections be withdrawn.

Specification Objections

The specification has been objected to because of informalities. Applicants have amended the specification to further clarify the invention and respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §101 Rejections

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101. Applicants have amended this claim to further clarify the invention and respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph and claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants have amended these claims to further clarify the invention and respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1, 4 and 11-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Baker. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Baker discloses a communications network being represented as a Bayesian network where devices and communication links are represented as nodes in the Bayesian network. Faults in the communications network are identified and recorded in the form of a trouble ticket and one or more probable causes of the fault are given based on the Bayesian network calculations. When a fault is corrected, the trouble ticket is updated with the knowledge learned from correcting the fault. The updated trouble ticket information is used to automatically update the appropriate probability matrices in the Bayesian network.

Regarding claims 1, 11, 12 and new claims 30-33, Applicants submit that Baker does not disclose or suggest the limitations in the combination of each of

these claims of, inter alia, searching a meta database or a case database in response to an instruction input by a user where each database is previously stored in a content offer server, the meta database including a rule extracted from a plurality of actual examples, the case database containing a solution to solve a problem, each example including an instrument having a predetermined function to determine information on a relationship between a solution and a problem to be solved thereby, displaying data regarding the examples of solutions to solve a problem relating to the instruction input with corresponding instruments based on a result of the searching, or each of the examples including an analytical instrument to determine an information on a relationship between the solution and the problem to be solved thereby, the instruction being related to a combination of a state selection, a part selection and an analysis condition of a selection, and a corresponding solution comprising a combination of an analytical technique and the analytical instrument, or displaying data regarding the examples of solutions to solve the problem along with corresponding instrument based on a search result, history of input instructions, and a plurality of instruments in the solutions with their priority levels in an order of degree of difficulty in destroying a sample to be analyzed when a morphologic observation is selected as the analysis selection.

The Examiner asserts that Baker discloses a case database regarding a solution to a problem at col. 2, lines 1-23 and searching a device having solution rules and a function to extract a solution corresponding to the result of having searched for the solution rules at col. 1, lines 45-67. However, these portions of

Baker merely disclose, as recited previously, a system using a Bayesian network model for automatically collecting knowledge, an expert system using such Bayesian model, and updating the Bayesian model (see col. 1, lines 11-17, col. 2, lines 1-24). Baker merely discloses systems using Bayesian network model. In contrast, the claims of the present application relate to searching a meta database or a case database in response to an instruction input by a user. Baker does not disclose or suggest searching a meta database or a case database, where the meta database includes a rule extracted from a plurality of actual examples, each example including an instrument having a predetermined function to determine information on a relationship between a solution and a problem to be solved, and the case database containing a solution to solve a problem. According to the present invention, a solution rule can be provided by using a meta database according to problem input by a user. The relationship between the problem and solution therefore stored in the database can be then effectively used (see, for example, page 3, line 2 - page 4, line 20). Moreover, according to the present invention, it is possible for a user to attain this relationship also with a priority level among solutions (see, for example, page 16, line 19 - page 18, line 16 and Fig. 18). These limitations in the claims of the present application are neither disclosed nor suggested by Baker.

Baker further does not disclose or suggest the instruction being related to a combination of a state selection, a part selection and an analysis condition of a selection, or a corresponding solution comprising a combination of an analytical technique and the analytical instrument, or displaying data regarding the examples of

solutions to solve the problem along with corresponding instrument based on a search result, history of input instructions, and a plurality of instruments in the solutions with their priority levels in an order of degree of difficulty in destroying a sample to be analyzed when a morphologic observation is selected as the analysis selection.

Regarding claims 3, 13 and new claims 14-17 and 22-29, Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1, 11 and 12 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims. For example, Applicants submit that Baker does not disclose or suggest displaying a plurality of examples of solutions searched out from the case database in order to urge the user to think up an idea for a new solution.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Baker does not disclose or suggest the limitations in the combination of each of claims 1, 3, 11-13 and new claims 14-17 and 22-33 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 2 and 4-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Baker in view of Syeda-Mahmood and further in view of Litwin et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Syeda-Mahmood discloses a network server which interfaces a client with selected database sites from a plurality of database sites. The network server includes a meta database, a search agent, and a refining module. The search agent

indexes the meta database with a user query obtained from the client, and then distributes queries, developed pursuant to such indexing, to the selected ones of the plurality of database sites. In turn, database site information (responsive to the distributed queries) is retrieved from the selected ones of the plurality of database sites.

Litwin et al. discloses an approach to solving data management system problems called multidatabase or federated systems. These systems make databases interoperable, that is, usable without a globally integrated schema. They preserve the autonomy of each database yet support shared access. Litwin et al. discloses why systems of this type will be of a major importance in the future, methodology for their design, and shows that major commercial relational database systems are evolving towards multidatabase systems. Further, Litwin et al. discloses discussions relating to their capabilities and limitations, presents and discusses a set of prototypes, and presents some current research issues.

Regarding claim 8, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of this claim of, inter alia, searching a meta database or a case database, which have been stored in a content offer server in advance, in response to an instruction input by demander, the meta database including a rule extracted from a plurality of actual examples, the case database including a solution to solve a problem, each example including an instrument having a predetermined function to determine an information on a relationship between a solution and a

problem to be solved thereby, or displaying data regarding the examples of solutions to solve the problems of the accepted data with corresponding instruments based on a result of the searching. As noted previously, Baker does not disclose or suggest these limitations in the combination of the present application. Moreover, neither Syeda-Mahmood nor Litwin et al. overcome the substantial defects noted previously regarding Baker, or disclose or suggest these limitations. Syeda-Mahmood merely discloses a multimedia database system in which media data can be hierarchically presented by three types of a map (see col. 6, lines 47-59 and col. 8, lines 12-56). Further, Litwin et al. merely discloses a database system operable on a mainframe, and a mini computer and so on (as shown on page 269). Litwin et al. further merely discloses a way of managing a plurality of database architecture (see pages 271-273, Figs. 1 and 2). None of these cited references disclose or suggest searching a meta database or a case database, which have been stored in a content offer server in advance, in response to an instruction input by demander, the meta database including a rule extracted from a plurality of actual examples, the case database including a solution to solve a problem, each example including an instrument having a predetermined function to determine an information on a relationship between a solution and a problem to be solved thereby, or displaying data regarding the examples of solutions to solve the problems of the accepted data with corresponding instruments based on a result of the searching

Regarding claims 2, 4-7, 9, 10 and new claims 18-21, Applicants submit that these claims are dependent on one of independent claims 1 and 8 and, therefore,

are patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding these independent claims. Applicants submit that neither Syeda-Mahmood nor Litwin et al. overcome the substantial defects noted previously regarding Baker. For example, none of the cited references disclose or suggest displaying a plurality of solution rules based on the meta rule searched out from the meta database, and a plurality of proposed contents that offer a solution based on the solution rules in order to urge the user to think up an idea for a new solution.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that none of the cited references, taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 2, 4-10 and 18-21 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 1-33 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

U.S. Application No. 09/923,427

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (referencing attorney docket no. 500.40449X00).

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frederick D. Bailey', written over a horizontal line.

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Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes